



Southeast News

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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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NUMBER 10



Christmas

Advent, the season before Christmas, began Sunday, December 1, 1974. We should be aware of those — centuries ago — who were preparing for a great event. "It shall come to pass . . ." is spoken often in the Old Testament. (Read Isaiah 2:1-5, 11:1-10, 35:1-6, 7:10:15, and 62:1-4.) Then the event occurred! (Isaiah 9:2,6,7 and Luke 2:1-14). We call this event Christmas!! The birth of Christ! God with us! To you is born this day a Savior, who is Christ the Lord!

In this event, God calls us through Jesus Christ to a mission of mercy, love, and justice in the world and for the world.

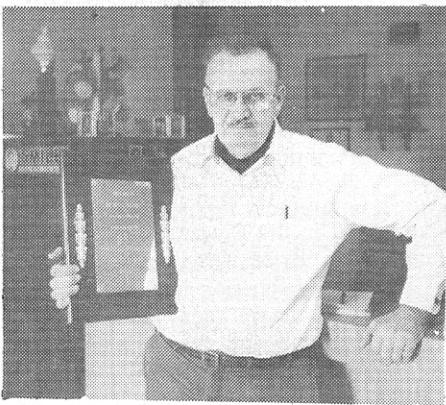
Still another event awaits: "His glory shall be seen — the glory of our Great God and Savior Jesus Christ. He died under God's judgment against our sins, so that he could rescue us from constantly falling into sin and make us his very own people, with cleansed hearts and real enthusiasm for doing kind things for others." (The Living Bible, Titus 2:11-15).

In anticipation of such events, we in the Southeast Conference Office and on the road (or in the air) greet you this Advent and Christmas season

—W. J. Andes, Conference Minister

Dr. Colbert Receives Plaque

In appreciation to Dr. Guy L. Colbert for his twenty years of services as the pastor-at-large of the North Alabama Association, the Association presented to him a plaque, which reads:



Dr. Guy Colbert
IN APPRECIATION FOR
Work and Service
by
THE NORTH ALABAMA
CONGREGATIONAL
CHRISTIAN CHURCH
October 1974

The Association, meeting at Jones Chapel, Moulton, Ala., on October 5, 1974, heard his pilgrimage of 32 years as a minister and as a chiropractor, honored him with words and prayer of appreciation and gathered those who had studied and been ordained under his leadership, for a renewal of their ministerial vows.

On Sunday, October 6, an ordination service was held at the Caddo Church, Trinity, Alabama. Dr. Colbert ordained the following to the Christian ministry:

Robert Partridge, Addison, Ala.
Clarence Price, Arley, Ala.

Mr. and Mrs. Carlyne Waldrep, Moulton, Ala.

Dr. Colbert lives at Hartselle, Ala., and has his chiropractor practice there. He retires as pastor-at-large December 31, 1974.

Karlton C. Johnson to Retire from Stewardship Council



Rev. Karlton C. Johnson, who has worked out of Atlanta for the Stewardship Council for the past nine years, will retire as of January 1, 1975.

Working for the Stewardship Council as Southern Regional Representative, but living in Atlanta and attending Central Church, Karlton has been of inestimable value and help to the church at large and particularly Southeast Conference, not to mention Central Church. He has constantly reminded us of Our Christian World Mission, where the money goes and how it is used. He has been a missionary for World Ministries, as well as Homeland Ministries. He has diligently worked on statistical records and kept before us our record of giving and not giving. He has helped promote the needs of the church in whatever area it came. He has helped show us what churchmanship is all about, not just the words, but with actions also.

Since the Johnsons have their home in Atlanta at 2388 LaVista Road, Helen and Karlton will continue to keep the home fires burning there and welcome friends to visit.

The Florida Conference paid tribute to Karlton in their November meeting when every church and minister said: "Thanks, Karlton, for a job well done."

The Georgia-South Carolina Association,

(Continued on P 2)

Strunk Thanks East Ala. Association

Dear Mr. McCormack: (Treas. E. Ala.)

Personally and in behalf of Uplands, I want to thank you for the gift of \$300 contributed by the East Alabama Association of Congregational Christian Churches. I hope that my speech helped you and the members of the East Alabama Association to understand that we are not really asking the churches to give money to build a fancy road beside a fancy house used by some of our retirees, but we are asking for assistance to help us with our program of concern for the mountain people, in training them in our Vocational School; in giving them direct aid when they need it; in helping during the time of disaster like, for instance, the tornado last year; and in giving help to the children of this area whose parents have such small incomes that a disaster that comes to the family budget by way of extra brace for a set of teeth or some expensive testing that needs to be done for a child, can be met by our Baird Fund. It is important for us to remember that we do have a Retirement Center which cares for a number of persons who have given their lives in the ministries of the church both here and abroad. There may be a time when we will be asking the church to help provide sheltered housing for those people, but you can be sure and assure the people of the churches of East Alabama that the gifts that come from them now go into this Community Service Program carried on by Uplands.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Lawrence N. Strunk

Snyder Writes Thanks from Elon Home For Children

"It was really my pleasure to be in the Southeast Conference. I don't know when I have had a more enjoyable time. I thoroughly enjoyed the visit to the Association as well as to the Antioch Church, Andalusia, Ala.

We have received a check for \$100 from the Central Alabama Association and, of course, the East Alabama Association gave me the check in the amount of \$300 when I was there. Thus, we have received \$400 from the visit. We have just completed sending out the letter to the pastors in the Southeast, giving them an opportunity to secure Thanksgiving-Christmas material if they would like to have it"

Sincerely,
W. W. Snyder

What We Did at the GASC Association Meeting

Using the theme, "Fellowship of Kindred Minds," the stage was set at our new Bonanza United Church of Christ at Jonesboro, Ga., for the Ga.-SC Association meeting, October 26-27.

Jimmie Fields of Charleston led a song fest at the beginning of each session. Karlton Johnson had a searching worship service to keynote the meeting. Augusta Pettie, moderator, summarized the "Actions of the Executive Council for the year."

Christian Education Report, given by Trudi Sanford, chairman, gave three major tasks for the past year: (1) Faith Explorations, (2) Strengthening Local Churches, and (3) Christian Education Camps.

Objectives for 1974-75 have been stated and strategies formulated to achieve each of them.

Outreach, reported by Matt Thomaston, chairman, cited five areas of concern: (1) Community projects, (2) Urban strategy, (3) Identity Program, (4) Special projects, and (5) Stewards and missions. Highlight of the report came in the echoes from each church assembled, told by a representative, of its participation in its own significant community projects.

Church and Ministry, reported by Karlton Johnson, Chairman, had two parts: Part I — The Association adopted qualifications for a "Church in Good Standing" in the Georgia-S. C. Association. Part II — The theme is further evidenced in the diligence with which the committee kept in touch with the roster of ministers. Received into the Association and Conference were: Charles Bell, by transfer from Southern Conference, and Norman Rates from the Baptist Fellowship.

"Good News" was brought by Tom Biggs for Villa International, Jackson Braddy for Georgia-Inter-Church Association, and W. J. Andes for the 17-76 Achievement Fund Campaign.

Other highlights were: a bus tour of the surrounding area, especially historical sites around Bonanza Church and Jonesboro; and the delightful program of "This Is Your Life" given by members of Bonanza United Church of Christ, at the Saturday evening dinner.

Officers for the new year: Moderator, Floyd Carmack; Vice-Moderator, Molly Curtright; Secretary, Geraldine Gilliam; Treasurer, Carl Jeter; and representative to Board of Directors, Freda Brown. Commission Chairmen: Christian Education, Trudi Sanford; Church & Ministry, Karlton Johnson; and Outreach, Matt Thomaston.

Total attendance of 65 included 15 ministers, with 13 churches represented.

Leaders Elected for Central Alabama Association



At its annual meeting on October 20, 1974, at the Seman C. C. Church, Central Alabama Association elected the above officers for the coming year: (L to R) Jettie Logan, Moderator; Ahearn Butler, Vice-Moderator; Freddie Powell, representative to Board of Directors of SEC; and Mrs. Frankie Blankenship, Secretary-Treasurer.

The assemblage heard Dr. W. W. Snyder of the Elon Home for Children, and voted to send financial assistance for his work.

News from Pleasant Hill Community Church

On Laity Sunday, Oct. 13, 1974, the following members served: Herbert Gass, leader of worship; Don Peck, responsive reading; Viola Cunningham, prayer; Dorothy Little, Scripture; Curt Schumacher, sermon. The ushers were four of our ministers: Luther Ballou, T. C. Braun, James Conlin, Walter Hall. Bob and Mary Peters were greeters.

The Offering for Neighbors in Need was \$589.

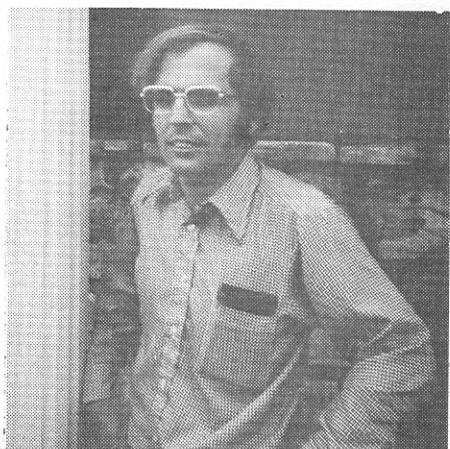
World Community Day service was held November 1 in the Pleasant Hill Church. Anna Belle O'Brien was the speaker.

A series of discussion meetings on the energy crisis have been most helpful. Later, the world-wide food crisis will be discussed.

KARLTON JOHNSON (Continued from P. 1)

October 26, 1974, gave recognition and appreciation to Karlton for his work in the Conference and Association. Other Associations also expressed appreciation, as did several other Conferences, including Southern. A special retirement dinner will be held by the Stewardship Council for Karlton on December 3 in Philadelphia, when Helen will also attend.

BALLEINE IS INTERN STUDENT



Robbins Parish in Morgan and Scott Counties, Tennessee, is enjoying the ministry of Lawrence H. Balleine — a native of Wisconsin, a graduate of Lakeland College in Wisconsin and soon to be a graduate of Vanderbilt University Divinity School in Nashville, Tenn. Larry is serving as pastor of Robbins, Deer Lodge, and Glenmary Churches.

The initial year with the Robbins Parish is an intern year to fulfill degree requirements for Vanderbilt.

Larry is also working with the Morgan-Scott Project for Cooperative Christian Concerns, a broadly-based ecumenical ministry striving to enable local churches and communities in the two-county area to meet their spiritual as well as social needs.

Central Atlanta HAPPENINGS

November 19 — A free concert by the Atlanta Symphony Chamber Orchestra was presented in the sanctuary.

November 21, 7:45 — Cathy Cummings of Emory Law School, spoke on "Legal Status of Women in Georgia."

November 23, 7:30 P. M. — Tilford E. Dudley, Washington Office Director of our UCC Center for Social Action, spoke, sponsored by the Social Action Committee and the Friends Committee on National Legislation.

November 24 — Mr. Dudley preached.

November 25 — Women's Conversations met 10-12 a. m. Nursery provided.

December 1 — A unique Christmas Tree was placed in the hallway on this First Sunday in Advent. Members were urged to place Christmas cards for church friends on this tree, and contribute the savings in postal costs to the Veterans of the Cross offerings.

THE NEWS Here and There

Rev. Artis Johnson, pastor of Bethany Church, Thomasville, Ga., is to be installed as pastor also of Beechton, Ga., Evergreen Church, December 15, 3 p. m. The two churches are within 10 miles of each other. Mr. Johnson is also a school teacher in the Thomasville, Ga., school system.

Conference ministers of the United Church of Christ will meet in Orlando, Florida, Jan. 27-29, 1975. The Council on Mission Priorities meets there Jan. 29-31, 1975.

The Southeast Conference office in Atlanta will be closed December 24-January 2, for Christmas and New Year's Day. Mrs. Joan Moore, the bookkeeper, will be at work some during that time preparing the final financial reports of the Conference, so that the 1974 books can be closed Jan. 13, 1975. Any OCWM funds for 1974 should be received on or before January 13, if they are to receive credit for 1974.

Any OCWM funds received in the Conference office at the close of 1974 or at the beginning of 1975 should be marked clearly which year the funds are for.

First Church Sweetwater Is Without Minister

Rev. James Williams, pastor of the church for 3 years resigned September 15, 1974, and concluded his ministry on Sunday, October 6, 1974.

The Church of the Savior, Knoxville, and the pastor, Rev. Donald Flick, have been assisting the Sweetwater Church by providing the preaching ministry each Sunday.

Day of Celebration at Brookmeade — WOW!

To quote one of Brookmeade's former pastors, the only appropriate response to our Day of Celebration is a resounding WOW! Exceeding all expectations, over 120 folks were present for the service of installation for Steve Gray and mortgage burning, with well over 100 remaining for dinner.

Running out of table space (but with an overwhelming supply of food!), folks had to move into the worship area to find room to eat dinner together. Following dinner, Ruby and Hibbard Thatcher led a lively group in folk and square dancing.

—Steve Gray

LAY MINISTER AND LICENTIATE ENROLLED



(Woody Clark and Marvin Brand)

At the South Alabama-Northwest Florida Association meeting with the Baker, Florida, Good Hope Church, October 19, 1974, Marvin Brand was enrolled as a Lay Minister in the United Church of Christ and Woody Clark, a student at Southern Union College, Wadley, Ala., was licensed to preach.

Both are members of Antioch Church, Andalusia, Ala. Woody is serving as student minister at First Church, Andalusia, Alabama.

MARVIN C. BRAND JR., Moderator of South Alabama-N. W. Florida Association, has been awarded the highest degree of the Future Farmers of America, the honorary American Farmer's degree.

Only one of 11,000 teachers across the United States is awarded this coveted degree, based on points each teacher earned that included participation in National Convention, number of state awards, and contests won, state officers from local F. F. A. chapters, and service to F. F. A. in general.

Birmingham Pilgrim

Pilgrim Church, Birmingham, Ala., has a total of 159 children enrolled in Day School.

The Blue Roof Gala held in September netted \$4,064.69, mainly from used clothing.

A new youth director, Joe Slaughter, works part-time and continues in school.

Birmingham Kindergarten Association holds monthly meetings at Pilgrim, and Alice Walker of Pilgrim is president.

The Dulcimer Society holds monthly meetings at Pilgrim on the 3rd Sunday. An easy instrument, the dulcimer is taught to anyone by the society.

Five youth went to Deer Lodge for the Mini-Conference in October. It was a six-hour drive each way, but all thought it worth the effort. Deer Lodge, one of the smallest towns in the country, without running water, provided entertainment and a hay ride.

Belvidere Happenings

The Belvidere Church, Belvidere, Tenn., received \$763.67 for the hurricane victims in Honduras. Their giving to Our Christian World Mission is among the highest of our churches on a per capita basis.

Rev. Collie Seymour is pastor and he spoke on "Expression of Aspirations" when the World Community Day program was held in the Belvidere Church. Other area churches were represented.

The Belvidere Church observed Youth Sunday on November 3, 1974, with young people conducting the service of worship. Participating were: Jay Bruce, David Shockley, Cindy Atkins, Marty Atkins, Dwight Shockley, Susan Seymour, Karen Liechty, Susan Zimmerman, David Fandrich, Jimmie Bynum, Ben Seymour, Amy Atkins, Eugene Atkins. The sermon was "A Dialogue on Christian Faith" by nine of the young people.

Rev. Collie Seymour was installed as pastor and teacher of the church on December 1, 1974. Dr. Wilson Q. Welch, pastor of the Howard Church in Nashville and Moderator of the Ala.-Tenn. Association, led the service of installation.

UCC Task Force on Hunger Considers Goals and Tactics

The UCC President's Task Force on World Hunger met initially Oct. 8-9 in New York to consider what the denomination can do to help ease the world-wide food shortage.

Informing the local churches of the existence of the emergency and what they can do to help were seen as major emphases of the 15 participants. Roland A. Kampmeier, a Tennessee engineer, chairs the Task Force.

The participants sought ways to influence U. S. public policy on food production and world distribution. It was felt that the stance taken by the U.S. at the World Food Conference in Rome this month will be crucial to the world food supply.

The Task Force discussed world population as a major influence on the availability of food. Divergent life-styles among the peoples of the world was seen as another influence.

Several members urged that the UCC concentrate on the changes needed in the standards of living of the rich nations to accommodate more equitable food distribution.

Franklin Thomas assisted in the Christian Enlistment program at Knoxville, Tenn., November 6.

CHURCHES AND PEOPLE MAKE NEWS

Ladies of the Cullman, Ala., Church (St. John's) gave a kitchen shower for the new church kitchen November 10 in the Fellowship Hall.

The Huntsville United Church put on a vigorous advertising campaign for its Bazaar, November 15-16. The minister, Hank Tuttle, and Meredith Jackson represented the church on TV "Coffee Break." Bill Campbell and Betsy Hanes appeared on Woman's Page. The lighted sign at First National Bank carried the news, along with the rotating wheel on Cablevision. Spot announcements were made on several radio programs of community news, articles appeared in the daily newspaper, and each member of the church was asked to send 5 postal cards to friends inviting them to attend.

On November 3, at 2:30 p. m., the Crossville, Tenn., church held a service of dedication, after being burned and rebuilt. Rev. W. R. Winterbottom serves as pastor.

Rev. Willard A. Kratz, formerly pastor of the church at Pleasant Hill, Tenn., died at his home there on November 15, 1974. Burial was in Pa., with a memorial service later at Pleasant Hill.

Youth from the Caddo Church, acting as hosts, presented a skit, "Coming Home" to Jones Chapel and Old Liberty youth October 27. They meet again Jan. 1975.

Old Liberty hosted the N. Alabama meeting Nov. 10, presenting a program entitled, "What Do I Have to Be Thankful for?" New officers will be elected at the district meeting at Mt. Lebanon, Steele, in April.

Lisa Shelton, Pres.

The Lanett Church sent for Honduran relief almost a ton and a half of clothing, with a large shipment of towels and sheeting material donated by West Point Pepperell Co. Their offering for Honduras was \$264.00.

Milton S. Hurst, Talladega College Dean of Students, spoke at First Church, Montgomery, Ala., for their Harvest Home Observance. Members of the Talladega College Choir sang at the service.

Our sympathy goes to Rev. E. S. Fetner and his family on the death of his wife Elsie Mathis Fetner, October 19. Mrs. Fetner was a long-time member of Langdale Congregational Church.

Mrs. Ollie Taylor of Roanoke, Ala., celebrated her 99th birthday October 26,

1974 in Crossville, Tenn., when friends and relatives gathered in a reception given in her honor. Mrs. Taylor lives with her daughter, Mrs. Anna French, in Roanoke, Alabama.

Rev. Joe A. French, the son-in-law, reports that Mrs. Taylor "enjoyed the trip to Crossville and had a wonderful time at the celebration."

Our congratulations to Mrs. Taylor!

Rev. and Mrs. George Staley Hunt of Albany, Ga., retired this summer after many years of teaching. He serves the Richland First Church as pastor.

Rev. Wesley W. Martin has retired from his work with Ministers Life & Casualty Union, but remains as pastor of the Barnesville, Fredonia Church. The Martins live in Atlanta.

The Church of the Savior in Knoxville observed Laity Sunday by having a Mission Festival. They invited the retired missionaries of the Pleasant Hill Congregation and fourteen came. Dr. Alford Carleton was the speaker.

The Southeast Conference has a new filmstrip, "Dollars That Make a Difference." This filmstrip interprets the work of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries in communities of the United States.

Write to The Southeast Conference, (U. C. C.) Box 29883, Atlanta, Ga. 30329 to request this filmstrip.

MILEAGE ALLOWANCE FOR MINISTERS has been increased by the Internal Revenue Service! The automatic mileage allowance deduction is 15c a mile for the first 15,000 miles you drive on church business, and 10c for each mile over that. That's a 25 percent increase from the old 12c-9c rule. And it's good for all of 1974!

Rev. Karlton Johnson, Atlanta representative of Our United Church Stewardship Council, visited with Pilgrim Church in Chattanooga, Sunday, Nov. 3. He shared in a training session for Christian Enlistment callers.

WHAT IS UPLANDS?

UPLANDS is a unique community offering various levels of care to the aging allowing them to growold with dignity and the assurance of security and support at a price middle income people can afford. UPLANDS offers employment to the mountain people of the Cumberland Plateau by maintaining inservice education in vocational skills. UPLANDS brings to retirees and natives a quality of life that shows Christian concern for each other as a part of Christian living.

National Leaders On the Move

Rev. George Nishimoto, of the staff of the discontinued Council for Church and Ministry became executive director of the West Side Ecumenical Ministry in Cleveland, Ohio., December 1, at its headquarters, 4315 Bridge Ave., Cleveland, Ohio, December 1 at its headquarters, 4315 Bridge Ave., Cleveland, Ohio 44113.

Rev. Hartland Helmich, formerly executive secretary of the dissolved UCC Council for Lay Life and Work, has been named Associate General Secretary of the National Council of Churches. He will assume his duties January 6.

Dr. Robert V. Moss, president of the United Church of Christ, underwent surgery on December 4, 1974, for the removal of his gall bladder. He plans to be back in his office by January 2, 1975. Remember him and his family in your prayers.

Millard Fuller

Writes From Zaire

Expressing great appreciation for gifts and money sent from Southeast Conference churches, Millard Fuller reported that some of the money was used to purchase legs, and that a new Lingala Bible is given to each person getting a leg. A Mennonite volunteer helps him.

"It is a never ending struggle," he reports, "to raise the needed funds for this ministry, including not only the wooden legs but the Bible distribution, eye glasses and poverty housing work. By God's grace, though, we're making progress. We now have funds for 400 Bibles for all the prisoners in central prison here in Mbandaka. Three thousand pair of eye-glasses are on the way here and fifteen houses are under construction for needy families. But we still need so much help, and your steadfast prayers. We are deeply grateful for the concern of all the folk there and especially for making possible good news for Lafenda Isalanza. Christian greetings to all our friends in the area."

RECOMMENDED —

LET ALL THE WORLD REJOICE, a 15-minute sound color film-strip about how Christmas is celebrated around the world. Has a mix of Christmas music and is useful for Christmas programs for children and adults. Produced by Stewardship Council's Office for Audio Visuals, 1505 Race St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19102 — \$11 each.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- December 1 — First Sunday in Advent
December 2-5 — John R. Potts from New York visits churches.
December 5 — 17-76 Committee, Atlanta Airport, 4:00 P. M.
December 15 — Installation of Artis Johnson at Evergreen Church, 3 P. M.
Offering for Veterans of the Cross Christmas Fund during December.
December 24-January 2 — Southeast Conference Office closed.
January 6 — Epiphany
January 6 — Local church reports mailed to SE Conf. churches.
January 13 — Closing of Conference books for 1974 O. C. W. M. Giving.
January 18-25 — Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.
January 24-25 — Ga.-SC Exec. Council, Atlanta.
January 27-29 — Conference Ministers in Orlando, Fla.
February 1 — Return of Local Church Reports from local churches to the Conference Office.
February 10 — Board of Directors, Atlanta
February 12 — Ash Wednesday — Lent begins.
February 14 — Paul Gregory from Board of Directors, Board for World Ministries, will visit churches in SE Conf.
February 16 — First Sunday in Lent.
February 21-23 — Local Church Consultants at Camp Calvin, Lovejoy, Ga.
February 28-Mar. 1 — Comm. on Christian Ed. and others at Camp Sumatanga, Gallant, Ala.

THE SOUTHEAST NEWS

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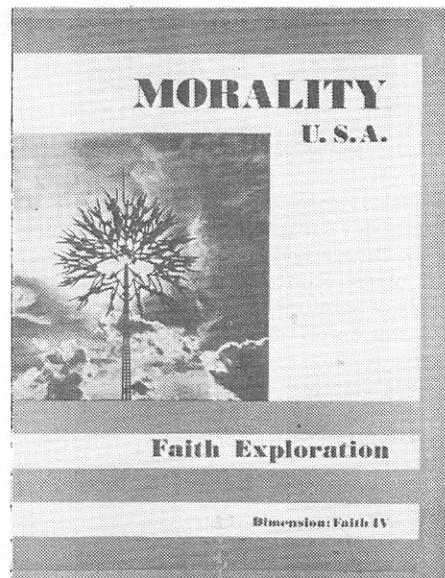
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Consider Morality USA



Is your church concerned about decisions affecting the lives of its members and decisions affecting our nation? Then material in the packet "MORALITY USA" is just what you're looking for.

Sent free of charge to each local church last spring by the Council for Lay Life and Work, it contains an Experience in Faith (for a weekend or a series of sessions) on "We Hold These Truths." It also contains several Adventures in Faith regarding decision-making, both personal and on issues affecting the entire world. A revised list of statements is also included for Adventure in Faith I: Beliefs Have Consequences.

If your church cannot locate its packet, or if you wish additional copies, they are available for \$1.25 from Central Distribution Service, Box 7286, St. Louis, Mo. 63177.

FREE

-FREE

-FREE

Do you read CHURCH LEADERS BULLETIN and FAITH EXPLORATION NEWS? These publications of the Office for Church Life and Leadership are meant for use by local church members who are interested in learning what other churches are doing and how Faith Exploration may provide a new thrust for their church. Send your name and address to: Office for Church Life and Leadership, 289 Park Avenue South, New York, N. Y. 10010. If you desire a number of copies for distribution in your church, send that request to OCLL, 1113 Rotary Drive, High Point, N. C. 27262.

Partners in Mission Richard Riesz

Physics, especially to a non-physicist, is a pretty dry subject. Maybe that's because it's so theoretical. Remember what they said about Einstein. He discovered the theory of relativity, but he couldn't repair the lamp on his desk. Well, in India, of all places, they're making physics practical. And the man behind this new program is a United Church of Christ missionary. Dr. Richard Reisz (REECE) is a physicist with all the academic qualifications you could ask for. And he teaches a post-grad physics course at American College in Madurai.

Dick is an enthusiastic teacher, but he doesn't like ivory towers. So he decided to climb down out of that ivory tower right into a new job. The new department of applied science, which he heads, takes all the scientists on campus and turns them loose to invent things, like a small computer cheap enough for local business men to buy, a pickproof electronic lock. Local businessmen are so excited they are giving money for research at the school and that attracted the government at New Delhi. The exciting thing, says Dick, is that the church has set up a model that others, like government, can use for the benefit of the whole country.

START THE YEAR OFF RIGHT IN 1975

Do you remember the novelty sign which bears the words "Think Ahead" with the last letter squeezed in because there's not enough room on the card for all the letters? There are a lot of implications to this down-to-earth advice. When applied to our work in the church, the slogan implies that unless one plans ahead and budgets one's giving to the church on a regular basis, the end of the year may come and one will not have achieved one's intentions or will not have fulfilled one's pledge.

January is a good time to "start the year off right" by giving priority to our stewardship of church support. Whenever you get paid or whenever you sit down to pay your bills, whether it is once each week or once or twice each month, think first of your stewardship commitment to the church. Write your church check first, not last. Why not try it this month? You'll find that this is an easy habit to get into and that you will have really started the year off right!

PITY THE POOR TREASURERS

When the bookkeeper of Southeast Conference gets back to the office in January, after the New Year's Day holiday, she will begin the new year by finishing up the financial business of the old one. In short, she will have to put "last things first."

Some of this holdover business is unavoidable. It always takes a few days to close out the accounts of local congregations for the past year. However, you can make your Conference bookkeeper's job a lot easier by making sure that your pledges, gifts, and contributions to your church are received by the treasurer of your local congregation or by your financial secretary some days before the end of December. In that way, your treasurer can close the local books, pay December bills, and forward final 1974 receipts for Our Christian World Mission and final payments toward Basic Support goals to our Conference office by the first week of January. This, in turn, will allow our Conference to close its books on January 13, 1975. And this will allow our national church treasurer to make year-end reports by January 17.

You see, you (and your fellow church members) are really the key to the process. If you make the fulfillment of your stewardship commitment to the ministry and mission of your church a matter for year-end action and do not let it drag into 1975, you will make treasurers happy all up and down the line. The Internal Revenue Service, you will remember, rules that gifts must be received by December 31st to be tax deductible in that year. So, take pity on the poor treasurers and write that end-of-the-year check now!

Share Christmas with Veterans of the Cross

In planning your Christmas gifts, don't forget our Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund — The Christmas Fund. The Christmas Fund not only sends checks and greetings to show our affection and concern at Christmas, but throughout the year to ministers who actively serve and their families are given practical help from the Emergency Fund in times of crisis.

A Christmas Haiku From Japan

Just as the father of James and John was a fisherman, so was the father of Kikaku Shimamura. And just as they were called by Jesus to become "fishers of men" in ancient Galilee, so has Kikaku become a "fisher of men" in modern Japan. For more than forty years now, Kikaku Shimamura has been a pastor in the United Church of Christ of Japan (the Kyodan). Most recently, Rev. Shimamura has served as the Acting Moderator of his denomination.

Mr. Shimamura has always been able to present the great truths of the Bible in a way that makes them easy for anyone to understand. He is famous for his ability to convey a universe of meaning in the traditional Japanese poem, the haiku. Last year, the December issue of the Kyodan News Letter featured this special Christman haiku which Mr. Shimamura had written:

Who polishes the stars
as Christmas
draws near?

When the stars have all been
polished one by one,
the Holy Night comes.

The face of every boy and girl shines
toward Heaven
when singing Christmas songs.

Christmas —
here too is a Mary
in the Mother's Home.

Ah —
there among the Christmas cards
is one
that has come from Korea.

OFFERING NEEDED FOR AMERICAN INDIANS

If your church did not receive an offering on American Indian Sunday, November 24, you may still receive one. Funds are desperately needed because:

. . . There are 21 American Indian congregations in our UCC, but a frightening scarcity of ordained Indian clergy.

. . . One-half of the American Indians are in cities to escape despair of reservations.

. . . Alcoholism and suicide are prevalent among American Indian adults and youth on reservations.

. . . Their lands are threatened by corrosion and waste of strip-mining and inundation from huge dams.